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# AVALON

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# AVALON

Missouri Southern's  
Monthly Art and Literary Magazine

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*Avalon* is published by Missouri Southern's communications department as a supplement of *The Chart*.

Persons wanting to submit material (artwork, photographs, short stories, and poetry) may do so by dropping it by *The Chart* office, Room 117, Hearnes Hall. Artwork and photographs submitted must be ready for publication. Size alterations may be made on such work if it is needed in order to make the material fit within *Avalon's* pages. Literary material submitted must be in a legible format (typewritten is preferred).

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN

As a co-editor of *Avalon*, it pleases me when I see someone thumbing through our pages, or when I hear people talking about a particular poem, story, or piece of artwork they liked. And I've been getting a lot of positive feedback about the last two issues. Not everybody's liked everything about them, but I've yet to hear from someone who didn't like it at all. In fact, almost every criticism we've gotten, we at the staff agreed with to a degree.

Something we should make clear is that the publishing of *Avalon* is an extremely valuable learning experience. Every time we publish an issue, we run into different problems. These problems require solutions, and coming up with solutions usually means trying new approaches. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't; but regardless, the next issue is always a little better because of our experimentation.

So, bear with us. We are definitely interested in your suggestions, and the manner in which we publish *Avalon* makes our production methods extremely flexible. Basically, we can do just about anything we can put on paper. Pardon the pun, but: the page is the limit.

Unfortunately, however, though submissions have been steady, there have been some submissions which we can't use. This is because of guidelines we set at the beginning, and restrictions placed on us by being a college publication.

1) ABSOLUTELY NO OBSCENE MATERIAL OR MATERIAL WHICH INSULTS AN IDENTIFIABLE INDIVIDUAL WILL BE PUBLISHED. That should be clear enough but apparently there is still some confusion. This includes cursing, even if it is an isolated case in your submission, and anytime a derogatory description is accompanied with a name. That includes first names, initials, nick names, and etc.

2) In order to maintain the fact that *Avalon* is a college publication for the College, we have to restrict submissions to only those from students, faculty, or staff members. That is not to say we don't appreciate the time some people have spent in submitting to us, but, unfortunately, this is a guideline we feel is important to maintain.

Before closing I would like to make it known that *Avalon* is very interested in short stories. We seem to always get more poems that we can print but few, if any, short stories.

Also, as is obvious with this issue, we need artwork. If you've done something that your proud of—Show It Off!

And in closing I would like to wish everyone a good semester, and thank you all for supporting us this far.

Oh, one more thing — Submit to *Avalon*.

*Mike E. Prater*

## COVER ART

This issue's cover was designed by Mike Prater of the *Avalon* staff.

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**THE DEADLINE** for  
submissions to the February  
issue of *Avalon* is  
Friday, Feb. 19.



## How Thoughts Were Thought

Once long ago  
when the earth was new  
no creature lived  
only wild things grew.

Then were created  
these horrible beasts  
their lives consisted  
of feast after feast.

Soon after that, the caveman came  
and saw the dinosaur,  
and he asked "What's that?  
I've never seen it before."

"I'd give it a name,  
but I don't know how to think.  
It could be I've discovered  
the great missing link!"

So there sat the people  
with not a thought in their heads  
wondering about the creature  
that left their hearts in dread.

"I know!" yelled one,  
jumping up in haste.  
"I've got the answer;  
we've no time to waste."

"I think we can think  
if we all had a thought."  
So they all got together,  
and the result was naught.

Sometime after soon  
and much before later  
the dinosaur came back  
from his home in the crater.

"Hi ho!" said one.  
"I think I've a thought!  
I suggest we all run  
to avoid getting caught!"

The people all ran  
and hid behind rocks  
they were terribly scared  
right out of their socks.

A thought, they decided,  
is nothing more  
than a stored experience  
that you've learned from before.

Ever since that fateful day  
so long ago in history  
people have thought thoughts  
from the mountains to the sea.

Dawn M. Ehrenberg



## Suzy

I see you in different circles now, baby  
Do you think you've finally learned to play  
The game?

But how does it strike you, does it fit well?  
Did you imagine you could just forget  
All the pain?

Now you see a bit of what you've been  
Toiling for  
You're thinking there surely should've been  
Oh so much more

You've got to live while you're alive  
But there ain't no free ride  
Nobody knows you,  
And no money's in the mail  
Don't look so pale  
Think for yourself  
Put your fears on a shelf  
Grab for the wealth  
(Use a little stealth)  
Think for yourself  
You little elf.

Marcus Martin

## Time Traveler

Time Travels on  
Tomorrow is yesterday  
and Today...A Memory

Traveling down the road, in Times chariot  
I sit and wander through the corridors of my mind  
Thinking of the past and future  
What it has given me  
What it has to offer

Time is kind and cruel  
It will-give Good Friends  
Irreplaceable Brothers and Sisters  
And then it all can disappear, in the blink of an eye

Though they will travel down a different road  
With me, their spirit still lives

As a Traveler of Time  
I embrace each moment as it comes to me  
And then let it pass  
So that I may remember the impression it left

Mark Smith

## Breaking Up

Out in the vast universe,  
we are alone —  
cold, lost, and afraid.  
Two people's lives cross by chance,  
as if meant to be.  
They touch souls briefly,  
they feel joy,  
warmth, and comfort.  
Then as time goes by;  
they are ripped from each  
other's embrace.  
Again, they are alone,  
clinging to the past, struggling  
to remember.  
Darkness. They have forgotten.  
Time moves on.

Dawn M. Ehrenberg



## A Song and a Tear

Scarcely had I heard the music;  
nostalgic, soft green tones upon my ear  
— knowing how I cannot cry,  
when a tear slid across my soul;  
a gentle gesture, deep and warm,  
from heart to mind  
for the song "Kathleen."

Returning after so long a time  
it ravaged my memory  
spilling tear after tear  
upon tremendous stores of tenderness  
upon long and sleepless yearnings,  
like the beginning of a dream!

It touched the great, guarded slumber  
of my pathos and my passions for them  
who yesterday, in conflict and confusion,  
made of me place of mourning  
and a combat zone.

But today, differences are settled, not by battle  
or reason, nor mutual agreement,  
and less still by warm embrace;  
but by the diplomacy of tears  
and the toil of solitude that enfold me  
in the mild wings of wisdom  
against the unrelenting years.

Dr. Vernon L. Peterson

## An Answer: What Was The Question?

I make no progress  
I have always been complete  
I am neither modern  
Nor ancient  
I am rather eternal  
And you ask me  
Why I do not perfect  
That which is imperfect?  
I can only reply--  
It is not my job, as yet  
I have many levels to breach  
Before concepts such as that  
Can even be considered  
For I am but one step  
Ahead of you and beyond me  
Is a force  
As mysterious  
And incomprehensible  
To me  
As I am to you

Marcus Martin

## The Drowning

Raped my eyes now fold in sunset  
to wear no light where her kiss came,  
to wake in field-stitched clouds  
the yellow house still lingers  
within the grated fingers of my memory,

I grieve each arm  
that locks within the arc of night,  
bellies slit across  
the attic of the sea--  
men who were never men to me,  
cursing their lungs in descending undulation.

Randy Scott



THERE was an old magician.

Merlin was his name,  
he appeared to King Arthur  
in a great burst of flame.  
THE King was dismayed  
the knights were in awe,  
because poor Merlin interrupted  
the King's great ball.

ALL the dancers stopped dancing  
and the music ceased playing  
so everyone could hear  
what Merlin was saying.

THERE Merlin stood  
looking this way and that  
cursing himself  
for forgetting his hat.

HE held out his hand  
and chanted some words  
but all that he got  
was a nestful of birds.

"HOW silly," said he  
as he looked all around  
unaware of being watched  
by the Knights of the Round.

"GIVE back my hat!"  
he yelled in vain.

"Oh, I really do think  
I'm going insane."

THEN there was a puff of smoke  
and everything was white  
but when the smoke cleared  
they beheld an odd sight.

MERLIN was sitting  
above the dust-covered floor  
wearing a cone-shaped hat  
as described in folklore.

"STATE who you are,"  
the great King proclaimed.

"Our ball is ruined...  
you're the one to be blamed!"

## VERSE BY DAWN M

THE people left the castle  
and the knights got their swords  
even Queen Gwenivere left  
because she was bored.

"SO sorry," said Merlin,  
"to have made such a mess,  
I am but a magician,  
no more, no less.

MY name is Merlin  
and from Avalon I come  
to bring a message from your father  
the late Uther Pendragon."

"MY dead father?" asked the King.  
"I speak the truth," Merlin replied  
and started his tale, with a ring  
from the great village bell.

"YOUR father gives a warning,"  
said Merlin walking to and fro,  
"You will battle October morning,  
and the good shall heed to the foe."  
KING Arthur was in shock,  
for his father was dead;  
how could he send messages  
not to be misled?





# EHRENBERG

MERLIN waved his wand  
and a burst of flame appeared  
showing Uther's image in mid-air  
barely visible when the smoke cleared.  
"FATHER," the King cried.  
"Is it true, this message you bring?"  
"Yes. Merlin has not lied.  
Do well my son, for luck take my ring."  
THE image then vanished  
leaving Arthur alone  
For the great wizard Merlin  
had returned to his home.  
SO there Arthur sat  
in a dust-covered room  
holding his father's ring  
wondering his doom.  
QUEEN Gwenivere was concerned  
so downstairs she came  
And there she spied Arthur  
though he didn't look the same.  
"ARTHUR, what's wrong?"  
she said. "I see it in your eyes,  
what did Merlin say that  
was such a surprise?"

THEN to Merlin  
Arthur did look  
as the great wizard  
produced an old book.  
"HOW can it be?"  
asked the young king,  
"that my father has  
sent you to seek me?"  
"IT'S in the book,"  
wise Merlin said,  
"so come have a look.  
Here's what I've read..."  
THE knights were in shock  
from the sights they'd seen  
Even Sir Lancelot  
thought it all a dream.  
ARTHUR told the queen,  
before going out,  
for he was sure it was a dream  
yet nobody knew.  
THEN out from the trees  
Sir Lancelot came,  
and Arthur could tell  
he was in great pain.  
THEN off of his horse  
Lancelot did fly.  
The King turned his head  
and started to cry.  
THEN they embraced,  
the King and his knight,  
all alone on the shore,  
no one in sight.  
THOUGH no words were spoken  
King Arthur knew  
his knight's heart was broken  
there was no cure, this was true.  
HE had fallen in love with a  
lady so fair  
having great, big eyes and  
long wavy hair. ¶





Julia Cheung



Donna Schwegman



## Untitled

The sky is heavy and gray  
Lights are turned on so that one may see his way  
Thunder rumbles in the background of the rain's light fall  
As the Beast looks out upon it all  
Alone in Nature's form of solitude  
He finds his inner sanctuary  
Reliving the sweet nightmares that he has lost  
The memories of Joy that it brought  
Fearing that he, the Beast, will not be able to find such  
again  
Desperately clings

Mark Smith





"Peggy"  
Jorge Leyva

## Untitled

I believed in you,  
The look in your eyes  
Told me  
it was okay

Everyday  
your smile  
filled my soul anew  
It was my strength--  
What I lived for.

Can I make it  
if I let go?  
Will I ever find you  
in someone new?  
...I'll always be looking.

Darla Clark



"Eyes of The Witch"  
Tod Massa



## Shelley

Her hair hangs down  
 In long, loose, soft auburn curls  
 Trailing down her back  
 Not unlike cascades of leaves  
 On a brisk autumn day.  
 The color of her scalp  
 Matches the blush on her cheeks.  
 Freckles dance on her face.  
 Long lashes, like spiders  
 On a string, bounce lightly  
 Up and down.  
 Her eyes sparkle brightly,  
 Twinkling like stars —  
 Brilliant, bright and beautiful.

## The Rain and I

The rain and I  
 We are intimate.  
 As it gently falls  
 It soothes and takes the hurt away.  
 Far away to where I cannot feel.

The rain and I  
 We are companions.  
 As it dances gracefully  
 It speaks to me in silent tones —  
 Tones mingled with laughter and tears.

The rain and I  
 We are sisters.  
 As the mist floats  
 It refreshes and cleanses  
 and brings peace;  
 Peace like nothing I've known.

The rain and I  
 We are one.  
 Together as an infinite being  
 Our souls and spirits synchronize  
 Synchronize as lyrics and song.

## Feelings From Heaven

The rain showers  
 Brief, gentle, spontaneous  
 Cleansing air, land and soul  
 For a quiet moment lent  
 Then, as quickly swept away.

Feelings from heaven  
 Solemn, solitary, sensuous  
 Inspiring lover, songwriter, poet  
 To delve from the height of enthusiasm  
 To the utter depths of despair.

Droplets of water  
 Perfect, patient, pacifying  
 Blending in perfect harmony  
 With love, hate, uncertainty  
 To enslave all who will listen.

## Lone Riders

Here I am again  
 Chasing that relentless  
 Feeling of hope  
 Like ancient men on forgotten trails  
 Dreamily chasing the sun  
 Across the darkening  
 Western sky.

Knowing I may never catch the hope  
 I seek  
 Does not discourage me  
 Just as the cowboys,  
 Knowing the trail never ends  
 Did not keep them from the ride.

Should I ever find the feeling  
 That so often just escapes me  
 Would thrill me to contentment  
 But like the riders at trail's end  
 Disappointment would be my death —  
 Should I find the hope I seek.



# Life With The NFL

an essay by Kevin Keller

**T**he sun was furiously beating down as I relaxed and tried to stay cool with another day of 100-degree weather. Life can sometimes be hard. After grabbing a chug off an ice-cold beer, I leaned back and splashed water across my body. The tanning oil seemed to have the effect of Crisco in the frying pan.

Whether delirious from the heat or possibly the antifeeze, my mind was taking a suspended float as my body was. With eyes closed, visions of Jamaica were dancing through my mind. The heat. The white sand beaches. The market place.

The steel conga drums beating in my head drowned out the blasting stereo and ringing telephone which was only an arm's reach away. My vacation, which started at last night's end till next day's work, was rarely interrupted for anything.

I was walking down the beach with my Island tan, waiting for the good waves to start breaking when I was suddenly capsized by a couple of sea monsters.

The rude awakening intensified as I realized both my roommates were home in the middle of the day with still three weeks of training camp left. After a quick inquiry, I breathed a sigh of relief to find out the boys were still employed. The coach had just given them the night out.

After changing Adam Ant to George Thorogood and restocking the cooler, they invaded my lounging water domain and proceeded to tell me of practices, rookies' initiations, aches and pains, and basically the whole nine yards.

Visions of sandy beaches suddenly were focusing into miles of astroturf as my dream world awakened. I'd only seen them three days before at camp, but having them home felt at home. A big house can get pretty empty after a few weeks.

Deciding to extend my vacation, I called to find a replacement at work for the night. Whether the evening's excitement was to sit at home and catch up on laundry or go turn the town upside down, I didn't want to miss it for the world.

Ken and I had roomed together in college, and then he made the pros by such a long shot. Why should the good times or anything change now, especially having the opportunity to step into a whole new ball game with all new people?

Oh, sure, things were different from college. I was the one writing out I.O.U.'s. Life in a big house was so much better than apartments. And we got Dave, some California hulk, to add to life's excitements as another roommate. Obviously, the refrigerator stayed stocked from such healthy appetites. New cars were parked in the driveway. This new life of luxury seemed so great as long as the big catch didn't come collecting.

Season or off-season; that was the question for which sparked the most adventure.

I always looked forward to spring mini-camp and the start of summer training camp just because it was like a high school reunion as players and their families and friends regathered to live the NFL season together. A bunch of overgrown kids would get rowdy and tell about their off-season adventures and careers while wives sat back and smiled amidst hiding fear. Will the circle be unbroken?

There weren't few days of mine off during training camp that weren't spent on the sideline watching. Yes, it did mean giving up the pool for a picnic basket and a lawn chair, but it was well worth it to get out of an empty house. The regular faithfuls were always there to watch daily drills,

see new hopes, and realize some dreams never materialize. Those poor guys would be running and sweating their tails off while drooling over our concealed cocktails. The only thing making me feel guiltier was going to camp on Mondays, which I rarely ever did. I couldn't stand the thought of seeing those guys sent packing, especially if it was someone I knew.

Actually training camp seemed easy once the season finally got started. But then again, what did I know? I just lived from Sunday to Sunday, game to game, and believe me that can be damaging.

It was great to have access to as many tickets as needed. They'd lock the guys up in hotels the night before games, which gave me the run of the house. Friends would start coming over Saturday nights after work or after the bars closed to prepare for next day's big event. After a Sunday morning Football Breakfast of Champions, we'd tailgate it on out to the stadium and await game time.

My home away from home. No matter how busy we kept that bear man, there was nothing that could dampen that inner feeling of pride when seeing those guys succeed. Unfortunately, not much could be done either for relieving the feelings of disappointments. Regardless of losing streaks, I'd tell them that win or lose, I could spend every Sunday of the year watching them play. They thought I was crazy.

A lot of people didn't understand, though. They'd come over and go to the game or watch the away games on the big screen and go home, as does the typical fan. They never saw behind the scenes.

I never knew what cramming for a test was until a few nights of staying up and cluelessly quizzing over code words and plays from playbooks as big as the guys I was quizzing. There was a lot of refilling ice bags and just playing junior remedial athletic trainer.

Sometimes, the damn phones would never stop ringing off the walls, especially when I was the only one home to answer them. If I could've just taught Clint Eastwood, our cockatoo, how to have done it. And what about all the griping and moaning about aches, practices, and the never-ending politics of the NFL. Don't forget either the times I was stuck with more than my fair share of the house work, too, while they were out practicing, playing, or leading the glamorous life.

But, you know, I wouldn't have traded it for anything. I was, by far, being taken care of more than I deserved. I made a lot of friends and met people influential toward a career from those endlessly ringing phones, and God only knows I always had my two bits worth of ragging to throw in. Extra housework more than likely kept me home and out of trouble, but most importantly, after coming home from the glamorous life, I was there with them as equal human beings.

The greatest thing I could have ever received from my roommates or other players was the way they respected me for the way I saw them. They were just out making a living. Ken was still the same good ol' Texas boy I met in college as was everyone else. Don't say they don't like the attention, but everyone needs that touch of simplicity and individuality.

Everyone's ideal is to be able to go out and have people recognize them for who or what they are. I'd heard from some of the older veterans, though, how the celebrity-approach can wear off real quick. Sometimes I got tired from just watching.

People were suddenly grabbing for what you are and not who you are.

Once in a while, I'd catch a team rendezvous to drive out in the boonties and take over a bowling alley, bar, or diner, but the one-on-one basis was the most self-rewarding and what I liked best. We'd just talk about crap we'd pulled in high school, the college experience, and any of those good "you won't believe it happened" stories you'd tell a friend.

Of course all of the ups had their downs, of which I did see a few, but it made me feel good that my neutral state could help and be a shoulder to lean on. Even more so, they were there when I needed them. You can bet I heard a lot as they did too. No matter how low or bad things seemed though, there was always the light at the end of the tunnel.

The beaming smiles of kids in Children's Mercy Hospital, orphanages, and detention centers always left a warm spot inside when they'd see the guys making their rounds again for visits. The autographs, the roadtrips, the late night B.S. sessions, and life in general on and off the field were all experiences.

Game-wise, feeling that burst of inner pride when seeing some awesome play was unexplainable. Knowing my every year's Christmas present was plane tickets to the last away game was more than anyone could ask for. I saw one of the oldest football records shattered before my eyes, and just when you think what more good can happen, hyperventilation rolled me over from the excitement of beating the Raiders 36-20 on national television. Thank God they were big enough for me to use an occasional service of literally being carried home. Will the circle be unbroken?

Another hot day seemed to heat up more as I gave up the pool for an iron to prepare myself for work. Halfway through my task, the back door bolted open as I quickly caught a pair of eyes long enough to look, "I'm sorry." Damn! What does one do?

Needless to say, it was a very long night at work so I arranged to have a few days off, which came in handy since Dave would have up to a week before leaving. It was good to spend those last days together, but no matter how much we tore up the town, I didn't hide the reality that seemed like losing a brother. With one more team cut to go, well, let's just say I couldn't handle losing two roommates in one season, not to mention other good friends.

It was if a peaceful dream had turned to nightmare as I lay suspended slowly floating in circles. Lost in the days of yesterday, memories warmed me as I unconsciously looked around. We'd cashed in the kiddie pool for the real thing when a salary increase allowed Ken to buy a new home. Dave was gone but certainly not forgotten. Other players had come and gone with another new season on the way, but I was somehow looking for more good times to turn into memories.

After changing the tape and popping a fresh one, I dove in and swam to my raft to get comfortable for frying. I could hear the phone ringing for the answering machine up on the balcony as my ritual drifting mind and body easily took up where they left off. I then breathed a sigh of relief that the car I just heard went next door and wasn't another shattered dream coming home.



## Untitled

I walk into the room  
 And the silence that you bare  
 Comes flowing through the place  
 While you all stop and stare  
 I'm not your carbon copy  
 Cause what you see is me  
 The way I look  
 They way I act  
 Or whatever it may be  
 Could you live your life for me  
 As I could do for you  
 Even though we're different  
 That's what you want to do  
 I am what I am  
 And that's the way I'll be  
 But why is this so hard  
 For those around to see  
 Cause the real you and me  
 Is coming from the heart  
 And that's the joy to living  
 The most important part

Kevin Keller

## Two Have Fade To One

There's a feeling in the air  
 That I take you everywhere  
 And no matter what I do or say  
 You're gonna be there  
 Even though you're far away  
 At the start of every day  
 The thoughts of you  
 Invade my mind to stay  
 You've become a part of me  
 Through dreams and reality  
 And I've come to realize  
 We've been able to see  
 It's like the sun without the light  
 Or the stars without the night  
 Because without them both  
 Would things seem very bright  
 You know it's every man's dream  
 To be on a winning team  
 So on broad shoulders  
 You can always lean  
 Cause we'll always be together  
 Like birds of a feather  
 Just you and me  
 Could things get any better  
 Our times have just begun  
 As I see the melting sun  
 Soaking the horizon  
 And day is done  
 You'll never need to run  
 The battle's just been won  
 Cause look at us as  
 Two have fade to one.

Kevin Keller

"Green Glory"  
 by Nora Ebsch

